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A Spectre is Haunting Samuel Clemens: A Marxist Critique of Wealth as Resolution in Mark Twain's Novels

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A SPECTRE IS HAUNTING SAMUEL CLEMENS: A MARXIST CRITIQUE OF WEALTH AS RESOLUTION IN MARK TWAIN'S NOVELS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS:

A SPECTRE IS HAUNTING SAMUEL CLEMENS:
A MARXIST CRITIQUE OF WEALTH AS RESOLUTION IN MARK TWAIN'S NOVELS

Jeff Carr December 11, 2006 56 pages

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The distribution of wealth occurs frequently in Mark Twain's novels, especially at the resolution. Indeed, Twain uses wealth as resolution in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *The Prince and the Pauper*, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, and *Pudd'nhead Wilson*. The repeated use of this formula in the author's approach to novel writing indicates the tremendous influence that capitalism had in shaping his worldview. In his early works, Twain appears to endorse capitalism in his use of wealth as resolution. *Tom Sawyer*, *The Prince and the Pauper*, and *Huckleberry Finn* each conclude with the distribution of capital as a reward to the protagonists and as an effective solution to conflicts presented throughout the texts. However, the tone of *Pudd'nhead Wilson* is decidedly different. This later novel ends with wealth as resolution, but the result is not the happiness granted to characters in Twain's previous works. Instead, the fates of Tom Driscoll, Chambers, and Roxy leave the reader with a sense of the inadequacy of capitalism. Twain's change in his approach reveals a rejection of bourgeois values. An examination at the resolution to all four novels reveals Twain's shifting *weltanschauung*, culminating with a rejection of the dominant ideology in *Pudd'nhead Wilson*.

Introduction:

Wealth functions as an ever-present and decisive factor in many of Mark Twain's novels. For example, in *The Gilded* Age, Twain and Charles Dudley Warner satirize the industrial and economic expansion of the post-Civil War era and the corrupt politicians and capitalists who profit at the expense of others. The theme of wealth is also central in *The Prince and the Pauper,* as Tom Canty, a peasant boy, and Prince Edward accidentally exchange identities, contrasting the hopelessness of extreme poverty and the extravagance of aristocracy. Twain identifies the latter as the desirable resolution when Edward is restored to the throne and he lifts young Canty from the depths of destitution into privilege. Twain explores this notion of exchanging economic realities further in *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, when Tom Driscoll, a baby of bourgeoisie lineage, is switched with Valet de Chambre, the mulatto baby of slave woman Roxy. Twain concludes with a caustic critique of wealth, slavery, and human nature. In *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, the protagonist Hank Morgan attempts to alter the superstructure of sixth-century England, replacing feudalism with capitalism. The result is not the progress that Morgan hopes for, but is, instead, apocalyptic war. In *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Tom and Huck find treasure in a cave, and the slave Jim is rewarded forty dollars in the sequel, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.* Each of these works reflects the author's conflicted attitude about wealth, and Twain's ambivalence toward capitalism is on full display. In *Tom Sawyer*, *The Prince and the Pauper*, *Huckleberry Finn*, and *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, wealth serves as the ultimate resolution, restoring order in a manner similar to that in which Shakespeare uses marriage in his comedies. The four novels simultaneously reflect their historical situation and Twain's conflicted *weltanschauung*.

One might wonder why such a great emphasis is placed on wealth in Twain's works. Georg Lukacs provides an explanation in his essay "Realism in the Balance" when he writes, "If literature is a particular form by means of which objective reality is reflected, then it becomes of crucial importance for it to grasp that reality as it truly is" (1037). Twain, of course, is a protégé of William Dean Howells, who in *Criticism and Fiction* writes:

> I confess that I do not care to judge any work of the imagination without first of all applying this test to it. We must ask ourselves before we ask anything else, Is it true?—true to the motives, the impulses, the principles that shape the life of actual men and women? (99)

Under Howells's tutelage, Twain often attempts in his works to represent life as it truly is or at least how he perceives it to be. It should be no surprise, then, that capital plays such an important role in his novels. Writing during a period of unparalleled capitalistic expansion in the United States, Twain must reflect the prevailing ideology in his literature in order to remain faithful to Howells's literary theory and his readers' expectations.

If we take the advice of Fredric Jameson to "always historicize," it is important to first understand the context in which Twain's works were written. This historical situation, the post-Civil War period in America, was notorious for being the era of robber barons, carpetbaggers, bankers, and exploitative capitalists and political leaders, who placed an emphasis in the national psyche on wealth as power. In addition, new discoveries of natural resources such as gold, silver, iron ore, copper and oil inspired a motivation to get rich quickly (Commager 1004), especially for manual laborers and the middle class. Throughout the country, "above or beneath all else throbbed the intensified priority of getting rich and its obverse, a fading moral standard when doing so" (Budd xv). Indeed,

what commenced in late nineteenth-century America is what Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels call "the epoch of the bourgeoisie," which they describe in *The Communist Manifesto:*

> Meantime the markets kept ever growing, the demand ever rising. Even manufacture no longer sufficed. Thereupon, steam and machinery revolutionised industrial production. The place of manufacture was taken by the giant, Modern Industry, the place of the industrial middle class, by industrial millionaires, the leaders of whole industrial armies, the modern bourgeoisie. (220)

Considering the nation's obsession with obtaining capital and the rise of the American bourgeoisie, it is evident why wealth permeates Twain's writing and often serves as the ultimate resolution to conflicts presented in plot development.

With such powerful social and economic factors influencing Twain's literary efforts, it is useful to read his novels from a Marxist perspective. Surprisingly, with the vast amount of critical essays on Twain written since the nineteenth century, there is little Marxist criticism of his works. With wealth and class issues central to most of the author's works, especially the four novels discussed in this study—*Tom Sawyer, The Prince and the Pauper, Huckleberry Finn, and Pudd'nhead Wilson*—it is difficult to believe that critics have neglected to offer significant investigation into what these concerns say about Twain and his time. Critics have thoroughly discussed how the issue of race influences Twain's writing, so much so that there seems little else to say about it. Since race and class are often linked, it is interesting that critics have had little to say about wealth in Twain's works. Such is the purpose of this study.

Before discussing this new avenue for Twain studies, it will prove helpful to show an understanding of what scholarly discourse is available to help us determine the best method to interpret the author's works. As one would expect, the most critical attention

has been paid to *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, long considered Twain's masterpiece. Much of the criticism written about the novel has focused on two issues: race and the problem of the ending. Whether or not *Huckleberry Finn* is a racist text is an issue that has engendered a great deal of heated debate. In his essay "Morality and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*," Julius Lester denounces the work and author as racist, when he says:

> Jim does not exist with an integrity of his own. He is a childlike person who, in attitude and character, is more like one of the boys in Tom Sawyer's gang than a grown man with a wife and children, an important fact we do not learn until much later. But to Twain, slavery was not an emotional reality to be explored extensively or with love. (343)

Lester argues that Twain's work is degrading to African-Americans and promotes racial stereotypes. His argument is typical among those who find the novel offensive.

Conversely, Justin Kaplan, in his essay "Born to Trouble: One Hundred Years of *Huckleberry Finn*," argues that it is foolish to critique *Huckleberry Finn* as a racist text, since Twain clearly humanizes Jim for a largely white audience. Kaplan writes:

> It seems unlikely that anyone, of any color, who had actually read *Huckleberry Finn*, instead of merely reading or hearing about it, and who had allowed himself or herself even the barest minimum of intelligent response to its underlying spirit and intention, could accuse it of being 'racist' because some of its characters use offensive racial epithets. These characters belong to their place and time, which is the Mississippi Valley thirty years before Emancipation. (356)

Kaplan's point is that the offensive language in the piece is present because of Twain's commitment to literary realism. There are seemingly countless essays like the two mentioned here arguing for and against teaching *Huckleberry Finn*. The issue may never be resolved, but it certainly appears to have been exhausted.

Besides the numerous studies on the issue of race in *Huckleberry Finn*, literary critics have produced a significant amount of discourse as regards the novel's ending. The

controversy commenced with essays by Lionel Trilling and T.S. Eliot responding to charges by critics that Twain's resolution to the novel was a failure. Both believed that the ending was appropriate. Trilling writes that Tom Sawyer's elaborate plot to help Jim escape "is needed to permit Huck to return to his anonymity, to give up his role of hero, to fall into the background which he prefers, for he is modest in all things and could not well endure the attention and glamour which attend a hero at a book's end" (285). Eliot concurs, writing:

> Readers sometimes deplore the fact that the story descends to the level of *Tom Sawyer* from the moment that Tom himself re-appears. Such readers protest that the escapades invented by Tom, in the attempted 'rescue' of Jim, are only a tedious development of themes with which we were already too familiar – even while admitting the escapades themselves are very amusing, and some of the incidental observations memorable. But it is right that the mood of the end of the book should bring us back to that of the beginning. Or, if this was not the right ending for the book, what ending would have been right? (288-89)

Both Trilling's and Eliot's assessments of *Huckleberry Finn* have been seriously challenged over the years, and it is now widely accepted by Twain scholars that there is certainly a decline in the quality of the novel during the description of Tom Sawyer's scheme to "free" Jim.

Much of that consensus is due to Leo Marx's essay "Mr. Eliot, Mr. Trilling, and *Huckleberry Finn*." Marx argues that Twain compromises the integrity given to Jim in the middle of the novel during Tom Sawyer's evasion scene at the work's conclusion:

> One does not object to the shenanigans of the rogues; there is ample precedent for the place of extravagant humor even in the works of high seriousness. But here the case differs from most which come to mind: The major characters themselves are forced to play low comedy roles. Moreover, the most serious motive in the novel, Jim's yearning for freedom, is made the object of nonsense. The conclusion, in short, is farce, but the rest of the novel is not. (295)

Marx's critique of the ending is widely influential and has set the tone for many of the critiques that have followed. Many literary critics have agreed with Marx, while others such as James Cox challenge his assumptions, arguing that Huck remains in character by allowing the bourgeois Tom to plan Jim's escape (309). Regardless of where one stands in the debate, the fact that the ending has been a topic of tremendous critical controversy indicates that something about it is not consistent with the rest of the novel.

With all the critical attention granted to the ending of *Huckleberry Finn* in the twentieth century, it is again surprising that scholars have not focused more on Twain's use of wealth to resolve the conflicts of the novel. Indeed, the fact the Jim's accumulation of wealth overshadows his newly-granted freedom is quite bizarre. This occurrence is, perhaps, the most serious flaw in the ending of *Huckleberry Finn.* Given that some of the most important passages in the novel involve Jim's quest for freedom, it seems out of place for Jim to be overly excited about obtaining forty dollars from Tom Sawyer after he learns that Miss Watson has freed him in her will.

Although several of the most significant works in Twain scholarship concentrate on the issues of race and the conclusion of *Huckleberry Finn*, there are many influential writings about other issues, including gender and sexuality. Leslie Fiedler's oft-discussed essay "Come Back to the Raft Ag'in, Huck Honey!" suggests that Huck Finn and Jim have a platonic homosexual relationship. Fiedler writes that Twain "proffer[s] a chaste male love (between Huck and Jim) as the ultimate emotional experience" (530). As one would expect, Fiedler's interpretation of *Huckleberry Finn* has generated a vast amount of debate among scholars.

Although more scholarly attention has been paid to *Huckleberry Finn*, there is a significant amount of criticism on Twain's other works. In his essay "The Phantasy of Boyhood: *Tom Sawyer*," Bernard De Voto describes St. Petersburg, the setting for *Tom Sawyer*, as a place where "boyhood existed forever" (249). This idyllic look at the novel is common among readers of *Tom Sawyer*. De Voto also argues that the work should not be considered a product of realism, because there is "no sex—none of the curiosity, the shame, the torment, the compulsion of young ignorance groping in mystery" (253). De Voto insists, instead, that the reader should approach the text as a testament to boyhood wonder, owing more to the romantic literary tradition than that of realism.

De Voto's assessment of St. Petersburg as an idyllic setting of childhood innocence has been widely accepted by readers. However, Tom H. Tower challenges this perspective in his essay "'I Never Thought We Might Want to Come Back': Strategies of Transcendence in *Tom Sawyer*." Tower describes "the systematic denial of freedom in St. Petersburg, whose name suggests authoritarian repression" (131) in his essay. In this light, St. Petersburg is a place where corruption and conformity reign supreme. Each member of the society is the product of a socialization that is less than ideal. For instance, Aunt Polly, according to Tower, "conceives of her love [for Tom] as a duty to bend him to the customs of a spiritually dead society" (131). In addition, the institutions in the novel have nothing to offer, as "There is, of course, neither learning in the school nor salvation in the church" (131). Even the resolution to *Tom Sawyer* is not idyllic. Tower writes "The events of the novel, I believe, make it plain that this resolution is anything but the idyllic solution so often imputed to this book," because "Tom sacrifices freedom to gain community, even though it is the deeply flawed community of St.

Petersburg" (139). Scholarly discourse has since followed both De Voto's and Tower's arguments with each perspective having its proponents. This study recognizes Tower's as the superior analysis.

The Prince and the Pauper also has its share of important criticism which deserves attention. In an early critique of the novel, "*The Prince and the Pauper*: A Study in Critical Standards," Arthur Lawrence Vogelback examines Twain's approach to the composition of the work and how critics during the author's lifetime received it. Twain garnered little recognition for his descriptive talents before *The Prince and the Pauper* was published (49). However, as Vogelback writes,

> with the publication of *The Prince and the Pauper*, the majority of critics awoke to a sharp realization of Twain's powerful descriptive gifts. This was reflected not only in the increased attention given in reviews to the descriptive portions of the book, but in the importance accorded those portions. (49)

Vogelback concludes that the scholarly attention given to *The Prince and the Pauper* when compared to previous Twain efforts was unfortunate, because it was the least like Twain. Instead, the novel was largely conventional, a fact that Vogelback says contributed to the critical praise it received when published and why the work has not achieved canonical status like *Huckleberry Finn* with contemporary critics.

John Daniel Stahl, however, disagrees with this assessment. In his essay "American Myth in European Disguise: Fathers and Sons in *The Prince and the Pauper*," he states that the novel "deserves serious attention, both as a story that has proven its durability with readers over more than a century and as a significant part of Mark Twain's oeuvre" (205). An important aspect of the novel, Stahl argues, is that Twain "invented his own version of the myth of the boy who creates and selects his own father" (216). Such is the case for both Tom Canty and Prince Edward in *The Prince and the Pauper*, as both boys

are displaced from their fathers. Tom Canty escapes his father who physically and verbally abuses him, while Edward is separated from his father Henry VIII who is loving toward him but tyrannical in every other regard. According to Stahl, this search for the father is not limited to Tom Canty and Prince Edward; it is also prevalent with Twain and "Americans of every generation" (216).

The final work in this study, *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, has also been critiqued extensively. As with *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, critics have focused on the role that race plays in the novel. However, less attention is devoted to discussing whether or not the text is racist. Rather, critics tend to argue that Twain's portrayal of race reflects the work's historical situation. Susan Gillman argues in her essay "'Sure Identifiers': Race, Science, and the Law in *Pudd'nhead Wilson*" that the novel "must be anchored in, and perhaps unraveled by, context of the cultural circumstances that produced it" (447). This study is consistent with her approach, favoring an examination of wealth instead of race. Gillman concludes that the novel is a product of the debates about "whether and how biological differences determine the natural capacities of racial groups" (447) which were prevalent in Twain's time.

Like Gillman's study, Arlin Turner's essay "Mark Twain and the South: *Pudd'nhead Wilson*" contends that Twain was influenced by his historical situation during the composition of *Pudd'nhead Wilson*. Turner writes of Tom Driscoll and Roxy, "The roles these two had assumed were leading [Twain] to understand that slavery and caste shape not only society and its institutions but individuals also, that instead of being merely a social phenomenon, miscegenation is a matter of life and a matter of death among human beings" (288). Twain's representation of race relations in the novel is consistent with the

struggles faced by freed slaves during his lifetime, according to Turner. Turner concludes by stating that *Pudd'nhead Wilson* "had probed more deeply than ever before into the complexities of Southern society" (294).

With so many essays covering an array of topics, why have critics paid almost no attention to Twain's use of wealth as resolution in *Tom Sawyer*, *The Prince and the Pauper*, *Huckleberry Finn*, and *Pudd'nhead Wilson*? Approaching the works from a Marxist perspective, this study seeks to address this oversight and perhaps open avenues for further scholarly discourse in regard to the role that wealth plays in Twain's works. In "A Letter on Art in Reply to Andre Daspre," Louis Althusser writes:

> Now I believe that the only way we can hope to reach a real knowledge of art, to go deeper into the specificity of the work of art, to know the mechanisms which produce the 'aesthetic effect', is precisely to spend a long time and pay the greatest attention to '*basic principles of Marxism*' and not to be in a hurry to 'move on to something else', for if we move on too quickly to 'something else' we shall arrive not at a *knowledge* of art, but at an *ideology* or art: e.g., at the latent humanist ideology which may be induced by what you say about the relations between art and the 'human', and about artistic 'creation', etc. (1483)

In this passage, Althusser suggests that the only way to know art is to examine it from a Marxist approach, which enables scholars to examine how the values of the dominant class influence literature and the proletariat. In this particular project, we will focus on how bourgeois ideology led Twain to craft his wealth as resolution approach to novel writing and how the content of his work changed along with his worldview.

At this juncture, it is necessary to identify some basic Marxist terminology and how it can be utilized to interpret Twain's writing. In their influential work *Capital*, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engles discuss commodification, "an attitude of valuing things not for their utility (use value) but for their power to impress others (sign value) or for their resale possibilities (exchange value)" (Dobie 82). These terms are particularly useful in

interpreting *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *The Prince and the Pauper*. In the former work, Tom Sawyer acts as a member of bourgeois society by collecting items for their exchange value and sign value. An example would be when Tom collects blue and yellow tickets at church to exchange for a Bible. He has no interest in the book's use value, but since it was difficult to obtain through merit, it serves as a status symbol for the boy. In *The Prince and the Pauper*, peasant-turned-prince Tom Canty shows that commodification has influenced his thinking late in the novel when he starts to enjoy his princely attire and wishes never to part with it. In addition, the author, Mark Twain, displayed an affinity for items with a prestigious sign value, collecting them for his home in Hartford, Connecticut. The process of collecting items with a high sign value is referred to by Marxists as conspicuous consumption (Dobie 83). Tom Sawyer, Tom Canty, and Twain himself can all be identified as being guilty of conspicuous consumption.

Another important term in understanding the Marxist thinking of this study is interpellation, a term coined by Althusser, describing how the "working class is manipulated to accept the ideology of the dominant one" (Dobie 81). The process of interpellation is visible throughout Twain's works. One should look at *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and notice how Huck Finn frequently cites Tom Sawyer as an authority on everything. In the novel, Tom represents the bourgeoisie, as he is exploitative toward both Huck and Jim. Because Tom reads all "the books,"—the foremost method for the bourgeoisie to reinforce its ideology upon the proletariat at the time of Twain's literary career—Huck often accepts Tom's will. Most notably, this submission occurs during the

previously discussed evasion scene, even though he is skeptical of the scheme and concerned about Tom's treatment of Jim.

Of course, Huck is not the only character in Twain's novels to fall victim to interpellation. All four novels analyzed in this study have proletarian characters who have been interpellated by the bourgeois ideology. Many of them, such as the slaves in *Pudd'nhead Wilson* and the peasants in *The Prince and the Pauper*, have developed a false consciousness due to this process. In other words, the proletariat represented in these works have accepted "a system (capitalism) that is unfavorable for them without protest or questioning" (Dobie 86). The false consciousness developed by Twain's characters reflects the historical situation in which Twain's works were written.

One final Marxist term to understand is *weltanschauung*, meaning worldview. It is Twain's *weltanschauung* which is of interest to this study. As his perspective on the world shifts along with his own financial successes and failures, it becomes apparent to the reader how it affects his writing. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *The Prince and the Pauper* were composed during a financially successful period in the author's life. As a result, the two works project a relatively favorable view of capitalism, although sometimes his *weltanschauung* appears conflicted when he critiques and satirizes bourgeois values. Conversely, *Pudd'nhead Wilson* was written during a time of poor investments and bankruptcy. Twain's tone throughout the work reveals a decidedly different approach to his views on capitalism. Twain emerges as quite cynical toward the economic system, and his critique of bourgeois values is far more caustic than with previous efforts.

With the relatively small amount of critical attention by scholars devoted Twain's wealth as resolution formula and his shifting views on capitalism in his novels, this Marxist study is long overdue. This analysis will reveal exciting new possibilities for Twain scholarship while simultaneously providing an increased understanding of the enigmatic author's worldview and what led him to make the choices that he made as an author. In addition, this study should serve to examine how the bourgeois hegemony influences all of society, including the arts, and how literature in turn might influence economic realities. By looking at how Twain's historical situation and shifting *weltanschauung* shaped the composition of *Tom Sawyer*, *The Prince and the Pauper*, *Huckleberry Finn*, and *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, the reader will gain a greater comprehension of Twain's work and the class struggle which has defined history.

Chapter One:
Twain's Perception of Capitalism in *Tom Sawyer*

For those living during the "Gilded Age," there could be no ending more satisfying than that which Twain offers in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876). The novel is more than just an idyllic hymn to boyhood wonder and adventure; rather, *Tom Sawyer*—especially in its resolution—is a reflection of capitalistic hegemony. According to Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci, the bourgeoisie impose a general direction of social life determined by their values upon the masses (1143). Clearly, such is the case in *Tom Sawyer*, when Tom and Huck find treasure in McDougal's cave, making Tom a hero and Huck acceptable for the first time in St. Petersburg society. After this discovery, at a social gathering at Widow Douglas's home, "The money was counted. The sum amounted to a little over twelve thousand dollars. It was more than anyone present had ever seen at one time before, though several persons were there who were worth considerably more than that in property" (216). The new wealth establishes Tom as bourgeoisie and allows Huck to socialize within such circles. Clearly, Twain reflects the ideology of the culture in which he lives by selecting wealth as the method to resolve the conflicts of the novel, such as the chaos initiated by Injun Joe and Tom's ascension into maturity.

The public perception of both Tom and Huck at the conclusion is very telling in regard to the material circumstances which shape the novel. Due to their instant accumulation of wealth, the boys are "courted, admired, and stared at" (216) wherever they go. Their influence becomes substantial as "now their sayings were treasured and repeated; everything they did seemed somehow to be regarded as remarkable; they had evidently lost the power of doing and saying commonplace things" (216). Tom and Huck even

become celebrities in print when "The village paper [publishes] biographical sketches of the boys" (216). The false consciousness of the citizens of St. Petersburg completely alters Tom and Huck's role in society, providing what bourgeois and interpellated proletarian readers consider a satisfying and appropriate conclusion. Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn are wealthy; therefore, they merit respect.

The reception that Huck receives at the end of the work particularly reflects the ideology of St. Petersburg. Early in the novel, Huckleberry is described as "cordially hated and dreaded by all the mothers of the town because he was idle, and lawless, and vulgar, and bad" (45). Although exhibiting a kind heart throughout the novel, Huck does not become respectable by bourgeois standards until he becomes wealthy. Even when his efforts to protect Widow Douglas from the wrath of Injun Joe are revealed by Mr. Jones—who decides to surprise those present with an announcement of Huck's involvement in preventing Injun Joe's murderous plot—at the party, Huck receives a "largely counterfeit, and not as clamorous and effusive" (214) reaction, which one would not expect considering the seriousness of the situation. After the selfless act, Huck remains a pariah. Once Tom announces that "Huck's rich!" (215) and proves it by emptying the bag of gold coins on the table, however, the formerly déclassé outcast is esteemed by all present. The bourgeois Mr. Jones responds to the spectacle by saying, "I thought I had fixed up a little surprise for this occasion, but it don't amount to anything now. This one makes it sing mighty small, I'm willing to allow" (215). In this passage, Twain reveals the major flaw with the capitalist perspective of Mr. Jones and those in attendance at the party: wealth is more valuable than human life. It is difficult here to

determine whether or not the author is satirizing such an ideology or if his thinking is a product of it.

Twain's conflicted *weltanschauung* is evident throughout *Tom Sawyer* and especially in the conclusion. A significant amount of scholarly research has already been devoted to contrasting Twain's apparent sympathy for the proletariat with his obsession with becoming part of the bourgeoisie. An understanding of the author's perspective is essential in interpreting his intention in using wealth as resolution in his novels. In his essay "Mark Twain and Social Class," Robert E. Weir writes, "Having risen from the ranks of the humble, Twain was envious of the rich but more sympathetic to the common folk" (195). Weir goes into great detail discussing the author's enthusiastic support of organized labor and his well-documented disapproval of all forms of royalty (200-05). In this light, Twain can be viewed as a populist who is well aware of class struggle and seeks social justice in his writing. If one is willing to accept this rationale, then the use of wealth as resolution in novels such as *Tom Sawyer* must serve as a mechanism to reward the oppressed proletariat, represented in this case by Huckleberry Finn.

Twain's awareness of class struggle and the exploitation of the proletariat by the capitalists is evident in several of his works. However, perceiving the author as a rigid populist provides an incomplete assessment of his *weltanschauung*. In his personal life, Twain's desire to be bourgeois and his tendency toward commodification is apparent. One need look no further than his mansion in Hartford, Connecticut. In his essay "The Tyranny of Things (Trivia in Karl Marx and Mark Twain)," Bill Brown describes the home as Twain's attempt toward "indelibly impressing his status upon the nation as the most widely read and best paid writer" (442). Therefore, his Connecticut home was

elaborately decorated with numerous items accumulated while he was touring Europe, and Tiffany & Co. was hired to renovate the interior (Brown 443). Indeed, Twain delighted in material possessions which exude a tremendous sign value. So while Twain frequently displays the conscience of a socialist in his writing, it is clear that he has been powerfully influenced by the ideology of the bourgeoisie, which is reflected in the resolution to *Tom Sawyer.*

Twain's conflicted *weltanschauung* is also evident in his development of Tom's character. Like the author, Tom emerges as a capitalist with a social conscience. Near the conclusion of the novel, Tom invites Huck to help him uncover the treasure asking, "Will you go in there with me and help get it out?" (206). The treasure box, of course, promises to be heavy, and Tom needs assistance in removing it from the cave; therefore, one can interpret Tom's act as not wholly a selfless one. However, Tom possesses an innate ability to deceive and manipulate others, and there is little reason to doubt that he could have exploited Huck's naiveté and secured the profit for himself. Instead, Tom aids his impoverished friend the best way he knows how: with wealth. But Tom shows compassion for Huck throughout the text, such as when the boys appear at their own funeral and Tom responds to Aunt Polly's emotional greeting by saying "Aunt Polly, it ain't fair. Somebody's got to be glad to see Huck" (119). Tom again proves his loyalty to Huck during the resolution of the novel when he states, "Half of [the money's] Huck's and half of it's mine!" (215).

Tom's compassion is not the only example of proletarian tendencies. He also exhibits an awareness of class struggle as shown in his fight with Alfred Temple, a boy new to St. Petersburg whose dress indicates his place in bourgeois society. He was "well dressed,

too – well dressed on a week-day. [. . .] His cap was a dainty thing, his close-buttoned blue-cloth roundabout was new and natty, and so were his pantaloons. He had shoes on, and yet it was only Friday" (11). Feeling inadequate because of his less impressive apparel, Tom decides that the appropriate course of action is to "lick" the newcomer (11). Later in the novel, when Tom becomes jealous of Becky Thatcher's feigned interest in Alfred, he says, "Any other boy in the whole town but that Saint Louis smarty, that thinks he dresses so fine and is aristocracy! Oh, all right. I licked you the first time you ever saw this town, mister, and I'll lick you again!" (126-27). Once again, Tom illustrates his awareness of class differences and his feeling of inferiority based on the sign value of Alfred's clothing. He responds with violence.

Despite some examples of proletariat leanings in the development of his character, Tom is ultimately a capitalist at heart. Well before Tom ascends to bourgeois status at the resolution of the novel, he exhibits the ability to excel at exploiting others for profit. Early in the text, Tom displays a talent for getting out of work and profiting from the labor of others during the famous fence whitewashing scene. After convincing Ben Rogers and other neighborhood boys to exchange their equivalent of capital for the privilege of performing Tom's manual labor, the protagonist comes home "literally rolling in wealth" (19). Tom later exchanges this new capital for blue and red tickets at church, which will enable him to purchase a Bible. The Bible has no use value to Tom, who is skeptical of religion; however, "the delivery of one of these prizes was a rare and noteworthy circumstance; the successful student was so great and conspicuous for that day that on the spot every scholar's breast was fired with a fresh ambition that often lasted a couple of weeks" (31). The pride that Tom feels at the resolution of the novel

when he becomes wealthy is also shown early in the text. Thus, like Twain, Tom emerges as a conflicted capitalist. He exhibits some of the characteristics of the proletariat, but ultimately, his values are analogous with the ideology of the capitalist society.

At the resolution of the novel, Tom's place in bourgeois society is cemented. Judge Thatcher, the most respected member of the St. Petersburg bourgeoisie, invests the boy's capital for him, an occurrence that increases the likelihood that Tom will remain wealthy. Judge Thatcher's new-found admiration for Tom is not simply inspired by the protagonist's willingness to accept Becky's punishment at school; rather, Tom's position of privilege plays a role in Thatcher's "great opinion of [him]" (217). Altered by his nouveau riche status, Tom now emerges as a potential bourgeois leader, championing the values of capitalist St. Petersburg, as Twain shows: "Judge Thatcher hoped to see Tom a great lawyer or a great soldier some day. He said he meant to look to it that Tom should be admitted to the National Military Academy in order that he might be ready for either career, or both" (217). Here, Tom's acceptance into the bourgeois circles is complete.

Tom's willingness to identify with the bourgeoisie at the novel's conclusion is not surprising when one considers his education. His affinity for romantic literature is crucial in his character development and is expressed throughout the text. For example, as Tom and Huck prepare to find the treasure, the former instructs the latter in the proper etiquette of a robber, saying, "They ain't nobody as polite as robbers – you'll see that in any book" (208). In the same passage, Tom explains the affection that women being held for ransom eventually feel toward the robbers who kidnap them. He states, "If you drove them out, they'd turn right around and come back. It's so in all the books" (208). For

Tom, "the books" have a profound influence on his character, perhaps more so than any other factor. They shape his ideology and determine the choices he makes throughout the novel.

In "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," Louis Althusser discusses the role that education plays in manipulating the proletariat into accepting the ideology of the bourgeoisie. Althusser writes:

> Children at school [. . .] learn the 'rules' of good behaviour, i.e. the attitude that should be observed by every agent in the division of labour, according to the job he is 'destined' for: rules of morality, civic and professional conscience, which actually means rules of respect for the socio-technical division of labour and ultimately the rules of the order established by class domination. (89)

Althusser proceeds to say that education has replaced the church "as the dominant Ideological State Apparatus" (106). Clearly, Althusser's theory applies to Tom Sawyer. "The books" which guide him through his ascension into adulthood have been penned by the bourgeoisie and, accordingly, reflect their ideology, which enables interpellation to occur. Despite his compassion for Huck and his awareness of class struggle, the values of capitalist society are firmly ingrained into Tom's subconscious. So, as previously stated, Tom is a conflicted capitalist, but he is a capitalist nonetheless.

Althusser's theory can also be applied to the Twain himself. As a middle-class boy growing up in Hannibal, Missouri, Twain was educated in a small schoolhouse similar to one in *Tom Sawyer* (Powers 92-93). He apparently detested many aspects of his schooling, but he somehow developed a passionate love of reading and was exposed to many of the same books which influenced his youthful protagonist so greatly (Powers 93). Some of Twain's favorite books during his youth include the Bible, *Robin Hood, Ivanhoe, Robinson Crusoe, Gulliver's Travels, The Arabian Nights,* and *Don Quixote*

(Powers 94). Twain was even influenced as a boy by the works of James Fenimore Cooper (Powers 94). Although Twain would later offer a caustic critique of Cooper, Althusser would argue that such works and other subjects learned in school reflect the ideology of the bourgeoisie and, accordingly, affected Twain's worldview. So like Tom Sawyer, Twain emerges as an individual greatly influenced by the Ideological State Apparatus of education, which propagates capitalism.

Huckleberry Finn, however, emerges as a foil to Tom's conflicted capitalism in the resolution of the novel, further illustrating Twain's ambivalence toward capitalism. Initially, like Tom, Huck is excited when they discover the treasure, exclaiming "My, but we're rich, Tom!" (210). Huck's enthusiasm for his new status proves evanescent, though. His indoctrination into bourgeois society "shut[s] him in and [binds] him hand and foot" (217). After three weeks of "civilized" living, Huck decides to return to the comforts of sleeping in empty hogsheads and smoking his pipe, but the now less-conflicted capitalist Tom Sawyer finds him and tries to bring him back to bourgeois society. Huck rejects this offer, saying, "Don't talk about it, Tom. I've tried it, and it don't work; it don't work, Tom. It ain't for me; I ain't used to it. The widder's good to me, and friendly; but I can't stand them ways" (218). In response to Huck's plea to be left to his own devices, Tom says, "Well, everybody does that way, Huck" (218). Tom uses peer pressure in an attempt to make Huck accept the dominant ideology. Huck responds by saying, "Tom, it don't make no difference. I ain't everybody and I can't stand it. It's awful to be tied up so" (218). Huck then recognizes the source of his misery, when he says, "Tom, I wouldn't ever got into all this trouble if it hadn't a ben for that money; now you just take my sheer of it along with yourn, and gimme a ten-center

sometimes—" (219). In this exchange, Huck emerges as the novel's displaced "socialist," preferring a classless existence over the bourgeois lifestyle that Tom Sawyer now embraces. Twain's choice of having Huck reject capitalism is compelling, given his and Tom's apparent affinity for it. Huck's attempt at avoiding the class system in St. Petersburg is, of course, truncated by Tom when the latter offers the former the irresistible opportunity to be a robber if he will only "try it just a while longer" (219). By "it," Tom is referring to bourgeois life.

Huck Finn provides one of two major foils to bourgeois society in *Tom Sawyer*. The other occurs when Tom, Huck, and Joe Harper run away from St. Petersburg and live on Jackson's Island where "it seemed glorious sport to be feasting in [a] wild free way in the virgin forest of an unexplored and uninhabited island, far from the haunts of men, and they said they would never return to civilization" (93). Jackson's Island emerges as a primitive socialist society, where all three members of the new civilization share responsibility for providing subsistence, and each has equal—and sufficient—time for recreation. In this passage, Tom, Huck, and Joe all reject the ideology of bourgeois St. Petersburg, while establishing their own classless society.

At first, the boys have no desire to return to the restraints which have hurt them in the past. As Twain states:

> They felt no longing for the little village sleeping in the distance beyond the majestic waste of water. A vagrant current or a slight rise in the river had carried off their raft, but this only gratified them, since its going was something like burning the bridge between them and civilization. (97)

However, they eventually develop a "sort of undefined longing" (99) for the familiarity of their capitalist homes. It is not too surprising then that Tom and Joe eventually reject the socialist paradise, as they are more readily identified with the bourgeoisie, even

before Tom and Huck find the treasure. Huck's desire to return to bourgeois society, though, seems rather out of character. As the displaced socialist of the novel, Huck frequently refuses to accept the restraints of capitalism, opting for the greater freedom afforded to a state of classlessness. When Huck says, "I want to go too, Tom; it was getting so lonesome anyway, and now it'll be worse. Let's go too, Tom" (109), Twain appears to misstep. Remember, at the resolution, Huck tells Tom Sawyer that the bourgeois lifestyle "ain't for [him]" and "[he] can't stand them ways" (218). So, Huck's willingness to the leave the classless Jackson Island for capitalist St. Petersburg is either a blunder on Twain's part or further evidence of the author's conflicted *weltanschauung*.

As previously stated, Twain's ambivalence toward capitalism is evident in many of his works and, accordingly, has been discussed by scholars. The readers of Twain's writing get the sense that in certain passages, the author longs to be the riverboat pilot of his youth, floating down the Mississippi River, while at other times, he seems content to be the Connecticut capitalist adorning his extravagant home with material possessions. It is not clear which is the case in *Tom Sawyer*. Is Twain endorsing capitalism or satirizing it? The one certainty is that the Jackson's Island passage presents a viable alternative to the oppressive nature of the bourgeois society which appears to emerge victorious in the novel's resolution.

Chapter Two:
Examining Wealth as Resolution in *The Prince and the Pauper*

Just as Tom Sawyer ascends to bourgeois status in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Tom Canty is granted socioeconomic mobility in *The Prince and the Pauper.* Canty, a peasant boy, accidentally exchanges identities with Prince Edward, contrasting the reality of peasant life with the excess of aristocracy. As in *Tom Sawyer*, the author identifies wealth as the desirable resolution when Edward is restored to the throne and he lifts young Canty from poverty into privilege. Once again, Twain reflects the dominant ideology of the Gilded Age by selecting wealth as the ultimate—and most desirable—resolution in *The Prince and the Pauper.*

Twain's recurrent use of wealth as resolution should not be surprising, when one considers the lifestyle which he was living during the composition of *The Prince and the Pauper.* The extravagance of Twain's Hartford house has been previously mentioned as a testament to his conspicuous consumption. The period during which Twain wrote *The Prince and the Pauper* was indeed quite prosperous and undoubtedly led to further capitalistic sympathies. Although *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* was not an immediate financial success—thanks largely to issues of piracy—*A Tramp Abroad* (1880) and other works generated huge revenues, allowing Twain to continue to live the bourgeois life (Emerson 105-18). As a result of this accumulation of immense wealth and material possessions of tremendous sign value, Twain projects a fairly positive view of capitalism in *The Prince and the Pauper* and subsequent works by returning to the wealth as resolution formula established in *Tom Sawyer.*

In addition, Twain was feeling pressure from his wife, Olivia Langdon Clemens, a woman of bourgeois lineage, to strive for literary credibility (Griswold vii). Her

influence led him to pen *The Prince and the Pauper*, wherein he abandons to an extent his unique style of writing in *The Innocents Abroad* (1869), *The Gilded Age* (1873), and *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* for a more conventional approach. Accordingly, Twain received better reviews from contemporary critics for *The Prince and the Pauper* than he did for previous efforts. As Arthur Lawrence Vogelback notes in his influential essay "*The Prince and the Pauper: A* Study in Critical Standards," the novel was "a work reviewers could understand; it fitted in perfectly with the tradition of correctness and imitation—with the genteel tradition" (54). With this special attention paid to literary conventions, Twain suddenly appealed to bourgeois readers. After all, he was writing for a bourgeois audience. Thus, the work reflects the values of the dominant class in many passages.

Reflecting the values of the bourgeois society in which Twain is writing, the three most important characters, Prince Edward, Tom Canty, and Miles Hendon are rewarded with wealth at the novel's conclusion, just as Tom and Huck are in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. Similarly, each character endures great pains to earn the reward. Prince Edward's time spent in Tom's place as a lowly pauper—running from a band of boorish robbers and sleeping amongst farm animals—is repaid in a manner that seems most appropriate to the author. Twain writes, "Then the coronation ceremonies were resumed; the true king was anointed and the crown set upon his head, whilst cannon thundered the news to the city, and all London seemed to rock with applause" (175). Twain, clearly a product of the historical situation in which he writes, once again chooses wealth as resolution. For Twain and his audience, restoring Prince Edward to the crown is the most

satisfying ending, an occurrence which contradicts the American ideal of democracy but is consistent with the capitalistic goal of acquiring wealth.

Edward's coronation as king is not sufficient for the resolution to the novel, of course. Tom Canty must also be rewarded with wealth and status. In response to Tom's loyalty and compassionate leadership, King Edward VI announces:

> Know, all ye that hear my voice, that from this day, they that abide in the shelter of Christ's Hospital and share the king's bounty, shall have their minds and hearts fed, as well as their baser parts; and this boy shall dwell there, and hold the chief place in its honorable body of governors, during life. (181)

The class conflict that is present throughout the novel is resolved with pauper Tom Canty's acceptance into the higher social class. Much like Huckleberry Finn in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Tom Canty emerges from déclassé outcast to a member of the wealthy ruling class. Indeed, Tom Canty's class mobility necessitates a different perception from others. King Edward announces:

> And for he hath been a king, it is meet that other than common observance shall be known, and none shall copy it; and wheresoever he shall come, it shall remind the people that he hath been royal, in his time, and none shall deny him his due of reverence or fail to give him salutation. He hath the throne's protection, he hath the crown's support, he shall be known and called by the honorable title of the King's Ward. (181-82)

Tom Canty now has a higher sign value. As a pauper, his life has no value except as a laborer or beggar. However, as the King's Ward and a new member of the upper class, the young man demands the reverence of all of England.

Tom Canty's reaction to ascension into a higher social status is quite enthusiastic. Twain writes, "The proud and happy Tom Canty rose and kissed the king's hand, and was conducted from his presence. He did not waste any time, but flew to his mother, to tell her and Nan and Bet all about it and get them to help him enjoy the great news"

(182). Tom Canty's response is consistent with how almost any member of the proletarian class would feel about social mobility. As in *Tom Sawyer*, Althusser's concept of interpellation comes into play. Tom Canty, a member of the destitute lower class of sixteenth century England, has been manipulated into accepting the ideology of the dominant class (in this case, Edward's aristocracy). Thus, he is overjoyed to become a member of that dominant class. For Tom Canty, Twain, and *The Prince and the Pauper's* Gilded Age audience, the impoverished boy's rise to wealth is the most satisfying resolution to the novel.

A significant amount of scholarly attention has been spent comparing Tom Canty's character development with that of Huckleberry Finn. Indeed, the similarities between the two protagonists are numerous. For example, in his essay "American Myth in European Disguise: Father and Sons in *The Prince and the Pauper*," John Daniel Stahl illustrates the similarities in each boy's relationship with his father. Both Tom Canty and Huck Finn have fathers who are "ignorant, brutish, and cruel" (212). For the purpose of this study, the reader will also note that both Tom Canty and Huck Finn begin their journeys as lower class outcasts only to become wealthy at the resolutions of their novels. The major difference between the two is their reactions to the newly-accumulated capital. Tom Canty, as just mentioned, is excited to join the dominant class. Yet, as illustrated in the first chapter of this study, Huck Finn is quite reluctant to assimilate into bourgeois life. So, why do the two boys who share so many similarities differ in their reactions to obtaining wealth? Is this inconsistency a failure on Twain's part as author?

Actually, both Tom Canty's and Huck Finn's reactions to obtaining capital at the end of each novel is quite appropriate when one considers the education that each boy

received. Althusser's "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" again becomes useful in this analysis. In his important essay, Althusser writes that the Ideological State Apparatus of education teaches children the "rules of morality, civic and professional conscience, which actually means rules of respect for the socio-technical division of labour and ultimately the rules of the order established by class domination" (89). The Ideological State Apparatus of education had a significant influence on Tom Canty, because "Father Andrew taught [him] a little Latin, and how to read and write" (11). According to Althusser's theory, thanks to Father Andrew's efforts, Tom Canty is granted access to bourgeois socialization, since most of the written word reflects the values of the dominant class. Huckleberry Finn, however, has no such access. As Twain tells us in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Huck "did not have to go to school or church, or call any being master, or obey anybody" (46). Thus, both boys offer a reaction to their accumulation of wealth that is appropriate to their backgrounds. The uncivilized (according to bourgeois standards) Huck was frightened of his change in socioeconomic status in the resolution to *Tom Sawyer*. Tom Canty, however, is a product of bourgeois socialization, and he accordingly accepts the indoctrination into privileged society willingly.

As regards his access to literacy, Tom Canty is more like Tom Sawyer than Huckleberry Finn. Both boys are more educated than Huck, and both spend their free time acting out romantic fantasies. Armed with stories from Father Andrew's teaching, Tom Canty assembles his own "royal court" early in the novel. Twain writes, "He was the prince; his special comrades were guards, chamberlains, equerries, lords and ladies in waiting, and the royal family. Daily the mock prince was received with elaborate

ceremonials borrowed by Tom from his romantic readings" (12). Tom Canty is like Tom Sawyer in that he is largely influenced by romantic thought, which, as Althusser would suggest, reflects the values of the dominant bourgeois.

Based on this analysis, Tom Canty emerges as a sort of synthesis of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn. He shares socioeconomic and familial similarities with Huck, while being socialized in a manner somewhat comparable to that of Tom Sawyer. In this regard, Tom Canty appears to be more like Twain than the author's two most celebrated characters. Stahl describes Tom Canty as "the outcast seeking to establish a place for himself in stratified society" (209)—an assessment that could easily have been used to describe Twain. Jerry Griswold writes of Twain, "After all, he was the American Dream come true: a barefoot boy from Missouri who had become newspaper royalty and one of the most celebrated authors of the century" (ix). Like Tom Canty, Twain originated from humble roots (though not as humble as the pauper's) and went on to achieve glory. So, when Twain chooses to reward Tom Canty with wealth at the resolution of his work, perhaps he is simultaneously expressing his desire to obtain capital himself. As in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, in *The Prince and the Pauper*, Twain appears to exhibit a faith in capitalism by selecting wealth as the ultimate resolution for his characters and, in this sense, for himself.

While continuing to incorporate Althusser's theory on education in "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," it is necessary to again examine Twain's learning. In this portion of the study, the author's childhood education is not as relevant as his studies immediately preceding the composition of *The Prince and the Pauper.* Since he did not draw upon life experience in this case as he did with prior efforts, Twain conducted

extensive research to add to the realism of *The Prince and the Pauper.* In preparation, he read W. E. H. Lecky's *History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne,* Charlotte M. Yonge's *The Little Duke*, James Anthony Froude's *History of England*, and Hippolyte Taine's *The Ancient Regime* (Emerson 118-19). Again, Althusser would argue that by reading texts written by authors influenced by bourgeois values, Twain would most likely be influenced by these values as well. The end result is wealth as resolution in *The Prince and the Pauper.*

As previously stated, Edward and Tom Canty are not the only characters in the novel who profit from Twain's wealth as resolution formula. Miles Hendon also finds his socioeconomic status changed. After aiding Prince Edward throughout the novel, Hendon is rewarded at the end with increased wealth and status. Edward announces:

> Learn ye all, ladies, lords, and gentlemen, that this is my trusty and well beloved servant, Miles Hendon, who interposed his good sword and saved his prince from bodily harm and possible death—and for this he is a knight, by the king's voice. Also learn, that for a higher service, in that he saved his sovereign stripes and shame, taking these upon himself, he is a peer of England, Earl of Kent, and shall have gold and lands meet for the dignity. (180)

Hendon, of course, saved Edward on many occasions in the novel, including sparing him from harm by the hermit and taking a beating for him. He is recompensed with wealth and a higher social status. For Hendon, wealth is more than enough reward. Twain writes, "[. . .] he dropped upon his knees, with his hands between the king's, and swore allegiance and did homage for his lands and titles. Then he rose and stood respectfully aside, a mark still for all eyes—and much envy, too" (181). In this passage, Hendon is reintroduced to bourgeois circles (he originally comes for nobility but is stripped of his wealth and title by his deceitful brother). For Twain, capital again is the most appropriate resolution to the novel.

Although wealth as resolution projects capitalistic sentiments from the author throughout, Twain occasionally seems to challenge bourgeois values, just as he did in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. And despite this study's assertion that *The Prince and the Pauper* is ultimately a testament to capitalist hegemony, Twain throughout this text and other efforts displays a belief that humans should be treated with the same respect, regardless of socioeconomic status. At no point in the novel is this idea more apparent than near the end of Chapter III when Prince Edward and Tom Canty exchange apparel. Prince Edward states, "Thou hast the same hair, the same eyes, the same voice and manner, the same form and stature, the same face and countenance, that I bear. Fared we forth naked, there is none could say which was you and which was the Prince of Wales" (18). In this passage, Twain tells the reader more than just merely that the two boys look alike. Rather, he is showing the reader that the main differences between the prince and the pauper are socially constructed. Of course, what makes Edward a prince and Tom Canty a pauper is the dominance of the upper class and the need for social markers, such as the crown and other ornaments. So, while Twain appears to endorse capitalism by selecting wealth as resolution to his novel, he at the same time is critical of the poor treatment of the proletariat by the exploitative bourgeoisie.

Twain challenges upper class hegemony further when he satirizes a royal dinner in Chapter VII. Twain writes:

> The room was half filled with noble servitors. A chaplain said grace, and Tom was about to fall to, for hunger had long been constitutional with him, but was interrupted by my lord the Earl of Berkeley, who fastened a napkin about his neck; for the great post of Diaperers to the Princes of Wales was hereditary in this nobleman's family. Tom's cup-bearer was present, and forestalled all his attempts to help himself to wine. The Taster to his highness the Prince of Wales was there also, prepared to taste any suspicious dish upon requirement, and run the risk of being poisoned. He was only an ornamental appendage at this time,

> and was seldom called upon to exercise his function; but there had been times, not many generations past, when the office of taster had its perils, and was not a grandeur to be desired. Why they did not use a dog or a plumber seems strange; but all the ways of royalty are strange. My lord d'Arcy, First Groom of the Chamber, was there, to do goodness knows what; but there he was—let that suffice. The Lord Chief Butler was there, and stood behind Tom's chair, overseeing the solemnities, under command of the Lord Great Steward and the Lord Head Cook, who stood near. Tom had three hundred and eighty-four servants beside these; but they were not all in that room, of course, nor the quarter of them; neither was Tom aware yet that they existed (37)

In this passage, Twain is clearly ridiculing the extravagance and conspicuous consumption of the ruling class. The amount of nobility "needed" to feed one boy reflects Twain's cynicism toward the wealthy. In several of his works, including *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *The Prince and the Pauper*, Twain rails against plutocracy by illustrating the absurdity of their rituals.

Twain likewise challenges bourgeois standards by projecting the lower class as merciful and ethical. In Chapter XIV, Tom Canty (attempting to play the role of Prince Edward) is appalled when he gains knowledge of Humphrey Marlow's office of whipping boy. Tom Canty says, "Set thy mind at ease—thy back shall go unscathed—I will see to it" (77). Here, the pauper-turned-prince shows mercy for those who are less fortunate. Twain's choice to have the lower class Tom Canty reject the absurd cruelty imposed by the upper class reveals his sympathy for the poor and distrust of the extremely wealthy.

Moreover, lower class Tom Canty emerges as a merciful leader in the novel. In Chapter XV, he reverses a decision to boil alive a man falsely accused of being a poisoner. As with the whipping boy scene, Tom Canty is appalled to learn of the savage ways of the ruling class. Tom Canty tells the earl of Hertford, "O prithee no more, my lord, I cannot bear it! I beseech your good lordship that order be taken to change this

law—O, let no more poor creatures be visited with its tortures" (84). Tom Canty, once again, is projected as merciful, rejecting the cruel punishments employed by the ruling class. Twain is also revealed as sympathetic to the poor and skeptical of the wealthy in this passage. He clearly satirizes the upper class when he describes Hertford as "a man of merciful and generous impulses—a thing not very common with his class in that fierce age" (84).

Twain also challenges bourgeois values when he shows the corrupting power that wealth can have in Chapter XXX. Once he finally becomes used to the idea of being a member of the upper class, Tom Canty adopts one of their most typical characteristics—commodification. Twain writes of his little pauper-turned-prince, "He enjoyed his splendid clothes; and ordered more: he found his four hundred servants too few for his proper grandeur, and trebled them" (157-58). Although Tom Canty rules as a "sturdy and determined champion of all that [are] oppressed" (158), he still finds himself mesmerized by wealth. In this regard, Tom Canty is again similar to Twain. As Robert Weir writes, "[Twain] both praised workers and lectured them like a schoolmaster. In similar fashion, he rubbed elbows with workers at one moment, and the next donned black tie to attend gala balls" (199). So even though Twain often champions the lower class in his work, he remains obsessed with wealth and status. Twain's obsession comes from the immense influence of the bourgeois hegemony, and this occurrence reflects in his writing.

As in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Twain displays ambivalence toward capitalism and bourgeois values in *The Prince and the Pauper*. At times, mostly through Tom Canty, the author shows sympathy for the down-trodden. But ultimately, he chooses to resolve the conflicts in this work with wealth. This fact alone shows the great influence

that capitalist ideology has on Twain's writing. Although he often challenges the values of the bourgeoisie in *The Prince and the Pauper*, he agrees with the dominant class that wealth brings happiness and is the most appropriate resolution for a literary work. Twain's choice to again employ the wealth as resolution approach to his writing shows that he is indeed influenced greatly by the bourgeois ideology.

Chapter Three:
The Capitalist, the Displaced Socialist and the Subdued Laborer in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (1885) garners a significant amount of critical controversy. As mentioned earlier in this study, the question of the ending is a compelling cause for scholarly discourse. The early critiques of the ending by Lionel Trilling, T.S. Eliot, and Leo Marx have led to nearly a century of debate. By looking at the resolution from a Marxist perspective, yet another interpretation presents itself. While critics such as Leo Marx present sound arguments in recognizing shortcomings with the aesthetics of the novel's ending and the marginalization of the theme of freedom, the most evident failure in the ending of *Huckleberry Finn* is Twain's inability to resolve his conflicted attitude toward capitalism. As with *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *The Prince and the Pauper*, the author offers no conclusive evidence in regard to which side he is on in history's class struggle. Again, his chosen resolution is wealth, but the end result is left open to interpretation. Twain the populist satirizes bourgeois ideology through Tom's foolish exploits and develops Huck as the displaced "socialist" wishing to escape the restraints imposed upon him by the dominant class. Conversely, Twain the capitalist decides that freedom is not a sufficient resolution for Jim; the freed slave must also obtain capital for the ending to be satisfactory.

But perhaps the resolution *is* satisfying. Although modern literary critics will likely disagree, the ending may have seemed appropriate to the bourgeois and interpellated proletarian audience of the Gilded Age. For the capitalist reader, one thing that can trump being emancipated from slavery is obtaining wealth. Twain provides financially for Jim, when Tom gives him "forty dollars for being prisoner" and for being "so patient,

and doing it up so good" (264). With the false consciousness developed from constant exposure to the ideology of the bourgeoisie, the proletarian reader is also likely to view this occurrence as positive. So even though the resolution in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is largely perceived as dissatisfying to literary critics, perhaps "it *is* right that the mood of the end of the book should bring us back to that of the beginning," (288-89, emphasis added) as Eliot tells us. Twain's target audience is the masses, a point made evident in the following excerpt from his notebook: "My books are water; those of the great geniuses are wine. Everybody drinks water" (2). Twain's works are less intended for those who appreciate high art and more for the average reader; therefore, it is appropriate that Twain's resolution to *Huckleberry Finn* should reflect the prevailing ideology of his time.

Also, it is likely that Twain continues to endorse capitalism in the text, despite what appears to be growing skepticism. Capitalism still worked for Twain during the long process of the composition of *Huckleberry Finn*. In his study *Mark Twain: A Literary Life*. Everett H. Emerson states that Twain began writing the novel immediately after the publication of *Tom Sawyer* in 1876 (142). He continued to work on *Huckleberry Finn* off and on, often putting it aside in favor of other works, such as *The Prince and the Pauper* and *Life on the Mississippi* (1883). In the meantime, the author was generating huge revenues and became involved with a publishing house, Charles Webster & Co., which was initially successful (153). So, it appears that Twain's increase in wealth would indicate that he again uses wealth as resolution as an endorsement of capitalism. However, he is at frequently critical of the economic system, displaying more of an ambivalence toward it in *Huckleberry Finn* than in *Tom Sawyer* and *The Prince and the*

Pauper. Perhaps the extended period of time spent crafting *Huckleberry Finn* explains the inconsistencies in perspective and the problem with the ending.

Regardless of what Twain's motives were in crafting his conclusion to the novel, almost all critics agree that Tom Sawyer emerges as the villain at the end of the work. Emerson writes "In *Tom Sawyer* the author described approvingly Tom's gradual socialization; now Tom has sold out, and as an instrument of conformity he explains to Huck what must be done" (142). Reading *Huckleberry Finn* from a Marxist perspective produces the same assessment. Indeed, while Tom appears as the conflicted capitalist in much of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, he is no longer conflicted in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.* His treatment of Jim is exploitative and oppressive, exhibiting the worst that bourgeois society has to offer. As Cox states, "Tom's adventures are a unique cruelty in a book which depicts so much cruelty. All the other cruelties are committed for some 'reason' – for honor, money, or power. But Tom's cruelty has a purity all its own – it is done solely for the sake of adventure" (310). Tom marginalizes Jim's struggle for freedom by insisting upon freeing him with "style," which, of course, consists of surrounding the hapless slave with rattlesnakes and rats. Tom even goes so far as to suggest that Jim pet the rattlesnakes, because "Every animal is grateful for kindness and petting, and they wouldn't think of hurting a person that pets them. Any book will tell you that" (240). Tom is willing to endanger Jim's life and subjugate his spirit for either the sake of entertainment or because he is so influenced by the bourgeois books he admires. Huck's insightful comment that "Human beings *can* be awful cruel to one another" (216) clearly applies to his best friend Tom, although Huck appears to be unaware of this detail. At the end of the novel, Tom compensates Jim with forty dollars

for the inconvenience which he endures, showing his belief that capital can make amends for such thoughtless behavior.

Tom appears most like an oppressive capitalist during the planning of his escape scheme when he insists upon bringing a grindstone into the shed so that Jim can write a "coat of arms and mournful inscriptions" (239). Tom enlists Jim—actually letting him out of the shed, but not freeing him—to help move the heavy grindstone. Huck tells us "Jim and me laid into that grindstone and walked her along like nothing; and Tom superintended. He could out-superintend any boy I ever see. He knowed how to do everything" (239-40). What Tom "knowed how to do" best was exploiting others for his own gain. This scene is reminiscent of the whitewashing passage in *Tom Sawyer*, in which Tom manipulates his friends into doing his manual labor while he profits. Tom is the *only* one who profits here, as he receives entertainment when his romantic schemes are executed. Jim and Huck, however, are merely subdued laborers. To make matters worse, they admire Tom and perceive him as their superior, as evidenced by Huck's comment that Tom "knowed how to do everything" (240). Jim and Huck are clearly victims of interpellation, both from Tom Sawyer and the bourgeois culture in which they have been socialized.

Even more so than in the first novel, Tom's actions can be attributed to his bourgeois education. Tom's ridiculous notions for freeing Jim can be found "in all the books" (240). As in *The Adventures Tom Sawyer*, Tom conforms to the "rules of the order established by class domination" (1485) of which Althusser wrote in his study "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses." In their criticism of the resolution to *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, many literary critics have pointed out how Huck accepts a

subservient role when Tom arrives and hijacks the narrative. Critics such as Leo Marx view this occurrence with disappointment, claiming that "Huck regresses to the subordinate role in which he had first appeared in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*" (296). Marx makes an interesting point in his study; however, he neglects to mention that Huck's willingness to follow Tom on most matters is due to the former's awe of the latter. As Sanford Pinsker states, "Huck's instinctive goodness turns out to be no match for Tom's book-learning and charisma" (646-47). Tom affirms his dominant role over Huck by undermining Huck's intelligence, saying "Oh, shucks, Huck Finn, if I was as ignorant as you, I'd keep still – that's what *I'd* do" (224). With his false consciousness, Huck is left to accept Tom's dominance over him.

Although Huck apparently agrees with Tom and other members of the bourgeoisie that they are superior to him, he displays a clear disdain for their ideology throughout the novel and at its resolution. Huck's wealth obtained at the conclusion in *Tom Sawyer* is threatened by Pap early in *Huckleberry Finn*, but Tom the capitalist enthusiastically announces at the end that "it's all there, yet – six thousand dollars and more; and your pap hain't ever been back since. Hadn't when I come away, anyhow" (265). While the materialistic Tom perceives this revelation as good news, Huck offers no reaction. As in the first novel, Huck is the foil to Tom, continuing his role as the displaced socialist in Tom's bourgeois world. Even though Huck's opinion of Tom—who has caused him nothing but grief in this second novel—remains high, he ultimately rejects Tom's bourgeois ideology in the oft-quoted final passage of the novel: "But I reckon I got to light out for the Territory ahead of the rest, because Aunt Sally she's going to adopt me and sivilize me and I can't stand it. I been there before" (265). As in the resolution to

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, Huck is threatened with the proposition of being socialized into bourgeois circles. The defiant Huck does not want to have to go through the process of being "sivilized" again. Huckleberry Finn rejects the bourgeois capitalist system which has oppressed and exploited him and looks westward for an opportunity to escape these restraints.

Twain appears to be critical of capitalism in his satirical treatment of Tom and in his development of Huck as displaced socialist. His treatment of Jim in the resolution is more difficult to comprehend, however. Jim is obviously a subdued laborer; his status as a slave indicates that he has been oppressed more severely by the capitalist system than Tom, Huck, or anyone else in the text. Indeed, Jim himself is a commodity according to the bourgeoisie of the antebellum south. Jim recognizes his value as a commodity, when he says, "Yes – en I's rich now, come to look at it. I owns mysef, en I's wuth eight hund'd dollars. I wisht I had de money, I wouldn' want no mo'" (69). Like Twain and Tom, Jim contrasts with Huck in regard to his desire to obtain capital. Bennett Kravitz describes Jim as a "slave capitalist [who] instinctively understands the [livestock market], because he himself has been a victim of a 'live stock' market" (11). Jim once had fourteen dollars, but he lost it "specalat'n"; fortunately, he has "hairy arms en a hairy breas'" which he claims is a sign that he is "agwyne to be rich" (66-67). Jim's superstitious belief proves valid when Tom gives him forty dollars at the end of the novel. Jim is "pleased most to death" (264), an occurrence which reveals an ideology analogous with Tom's and conflicting with Huck's. Jim exclaims:

> *Dah*, now, Huck what I tell you? – what I tell you up dah on Jackson islan'? I *tole* you I got hairy breas', en what's de sign un it; en I *tole* you I ben rich wunst, en gwineter to be rich *agin*; en it's come true; en heah she *is! Dah,* now! doan' talk to

> *me* – signs is *signs,* mine I tell you; en I knowed jis' 's well 'at I uz gwineter be rich agin as I's a stannin' heah dis minute! (264-65)

While Jim's reaction to obtaining capital is not surprising when one considers that he, like other subdued laborers, has been interpellated by the bourgeoisie value system, the shocking reality is that he makes no mention of his newly-acquired freedom. After years of servitude, why is Jim so excited about getting forty dollars, but he has nothing to say about being free? His reaction in this circumstance seems unrealistic, suggesting that Twain is more influenced by the bourgeois superstructure than Jim is. In essence, Twain is telling the reader that Jim's emancipation is not satisfying enough as resolution, so the author inserts the presentation of capital.

Of course, it is possible that Twain provides Jim with a small share of Tom Sawyer's wealth at the end because he recognizes the severe limitations of freedom in a capitalist society. When Tom announces that Jim is "free as any cretur that walks the earth" (262), the reader gets the impression that social justice has occurred. But once emancipated, what is in store for Jim? Pinsker writes, "Attentive readers cannot help but ask themselves, given all that the book has demonstrated, 'How *free* is this?'—for not only the newly freed Jim, but also for Huck, for Tom, for everyone on the Phelps plantation and for everybody back home" (646). Pinsker asks an excellent question, and the answer is that no one in the novel achieves true freedom, because they all live in a capitalist society which exploits and causes alienation. Because of his race, Jim, in particular, will prove unable to prosper in such an economic system. He will likely spend the rest of his life drudging away in poor working conditions for excessive hours, producing more capital for the bourgeoisie, while at the same time believing the false precepts of capitalism. There appears to be no way for Twain to craft a happy resolution for Jim.

The forty dollars from Tom Sawyer can only marginally alleviate the burden he will endure as a continuously subdued laborer. However, it is all that Twain can really offer the proletarian Jim.

Jim and Huck do experience freedom briefly in the novel, though. As in *Tom Sawyer*, Twain offers an alternative to capitalism in *Huckleberry Finn*, when Huck and Jim share resources and divide labor equally on Jackson's Island. Huck explains, "While he built a fire in a grassy open place amongst the trees, I fetched meal and bacon and coffee [. . .]. I catched a good big cat-fish, too, and Jim cleaned him with his knife, and fried him" (65). As in the first novel, this passage illustrates the merits of socialism. Neither Huck nor Jim represents the bourgeoisie, exploiting and alienating the other; conversely, they work together to ensure a quality of life for both. The results are satiated appetites and increased time for leisure: "Then when we got pretty well stuffed, we laid off and lazied" (65). Contrasting with his actions in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Huck does not desire a return to bourgeois civilization, as he tells his friend: "Jim, this is nice. [. . .] I wouldn't want to be nowhere else but here" (70). The displaced socialist finally finds a home on Jackson's Island; unfortunately, it cannot last, because bourgeois men from St. Petersburg are looking for Jim to claim the reward. Jim and Huck must leave their socialist utopia behind and begin their adventure down the Mississippi River. Twain's alternative to wealth as resolution is appealing, but, in this passage, he illustrates how socialism will be difficult to establish and maintain because of the greed and far-reaching influence of the bourgeoisie.

So what is Twain saying about capitalism in his use of wealth as resolution in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*? Is he endorsing the system that manipulates, exploits,

and alienates the masses by offering wealth as the best possible resolution to a literary work? Or is he subversively attacking capitalism through satire? The answer appears to be a little bit of both. Although Twain is clearly mesmerized by wealth, he vividly illustrates the failure of capitalism in this novel. Twain the Connecticut capitalist likely perceives obtaining wealth as the appropriate resolution to a story, while Twain the populist longs to "light out for the Territory" with Huck to escape bourgeois restraints. The one certainty that can be derived from Twain's wealth as resolution formula is that the author expresses an ambivalence toward capitalism which he tries to reconcile in his work. While Twain accurately reflects the ideology of our materialistic society in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, The Prince and the Pauper,* and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, he also offers a glimpse of the viable alternative in the primitive socialist societies on Jackson's Island. These brief moments of classlessness for Tom, Huck, and Jim provide hope for the reader living under the dominant bourgeois culture that repressive systems will one day be replaced with ones that are socially just.

Chapter Four:
The Failure of Wealth as Resolution in *Pudd'nhead Wilson*

In his essay "As Free as Any Cretur . . .," Leslie Fiedler writes of *Pudd'nhead Wilson* (1892), "Morally, it is one of the most honest books of our literature, superior in this one respect to *Huckleberry Finn*; for here Twain permits himself no sentimental relenting, but accepts for once the logic of his own premises" (249). One reason that brings Fiedler to make this claim is the absence of what the critic calls a "fake happy ending," such as the ones present in *Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *The Prince and the Pauper*, and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. As in his previous works, Twain uses his wealth as resolution formula to conclude *Pudd'nhead Wilson*. However, the author deviates from this established pattern of writing, leaving the reader with a conclusion in which all the characters do not have a happy ending. Indeed, Tom Driscoll, Roxy, and Chambers find themselves miserable at the end of *Pudd'nhead Wilson*. Twain's shift from the wealth as happy ending approach of earlier novels can be explained by a diminishing faith in capitalism brought on by his own financial hardships during the 1890s. Accordingly, more so than any of Twain's previous works, *Pudd'nhead Wilson* reflects the inherent flaws of capitalism.

Understanding Twain's apparent faith in capitalism during the composition of *Tom Sawyer*, *The Prince and the Pauper*, and *Huckleberry Finn* is not difficult: the economic system was working for him at the time. As mentioned in previous chapters, Twain's rise to upper class status undoubtedly influenced his early efforts. Circumstances changed for the author in the late 1880s-early 1890s, of course, as a series of bad investments led to financial hardship. Foremost among these poor business choices was Twain's heavy involvement with the notorious Paige typesetter. Much of Twain's wealth accumulated

from book sales and his publishing company vanished, a development well-known and thoroughly discussed among Twain scholars. In his study *"Hatching Ruin," or Mark Twain's Road to Bankruptcy*, Charles H. Gold writes, "He was becoming more deeply involved with Paige. He had voluntarily taken over the role of sole supplier of venture capital for an insatiable cash consumer, and this at a time when the publishing company was less and less able to supply the money" (150). Unfortunately, for Twain, the failures with the Paige typesetter came simultaneously with decreased revenue, and "the grand calamity of his personal bankruptcy began to take shape" (Gold 150). The financial difficulties that followed had a tremendous impact on the composition of *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, just as the author's successes helped shape his early novels.

The loss of Twain's wealth came during a time of economic crisis in the United States. Financial ruin was not limited to the Hartford House as Twain wrote *Pudd'nhead Wilson*. As John Carlos Rowe writes in his essay "Fatal Speculations: Murder, Money, and Manners in *Pudd'nhead Wilson*," "Indeed, *Pudd'nhead Wilson* was written on the verge of the Panic of 1893 (and rewritten and proofread during the Panic), which was the final blow to Twain's publishing company, Webster and Company, and his dreams for the commercial success of the Paige Typesetter" (437). Twain took the financial losses personally, which explains the waning faith in capitalism visible in his later writing. Rowe continues:

> Twain responded to the Panic of 1893 as if it were some perverse fate sent specifically to punish him. The agrarian institution of slavery had been replaced by the urban servitude of those victimized by a speculative economy. The fact that Twain was no mere innocent victim, but himself an active figure in the very speculative enterprises that [Charles Dudley] Warner and he had so viciously criticized in the year of the last major American panic—the Panic of 1873—must have weighed heavily upon the writer's conscience. (437-38)

After having embraced capitalism with some reservations early in his writing career, Twain makes an apparent shift in his worldview. Perhaps, as Rowe suggests, this shift was caused by the author's realization that the exploitation of the proletariat during the Gilded Age by the bourgeoisie was unfair.

Whether Twain's shifting *weltanschauung* was the result of self-pity or guilt is unclear, but the effect on *Pudd'nhead Wilson* is obvious, as the novel has a tone decidedly different from earlier efforts. Twain's growing cynicism toward capitalism is evident throughout the work. Indeed, the reader need only skim the novel to uncover the loss of faith in the economic system he once appeared to support. Several of the epigraphs at the beginning of each chapter, selections from Pudd'nhead Wilson's calendar, reveal skepticism. For instance, at the beginning of Chapter 13, Twain writes, "October. This is one of the peculiarly dangerous months to speculate in stocks in. The others are July, January, September, April, November, May, March, June, December, August, and February" (67). The author challenges capitalism further in Chapter 15, when he writes, "Behold, the fool saith, 'Put not all thine eggs in the one basket'—which is but a manner of saying, 'Scatter your money and your attention'; but the wise man saith, 'Put all your eggs in the one basket and WATCH THAT BASKET'" (79). In both epigraphs, Twain replaces the ambivalence toward capitalism prevalent in his earlier works with a clear distrust of free market competition. Coming from a man who pursued wealth with an uncanny zeal, this critical assessment would be unlikely if not for the bankruptcy caused by the Paige typesetter and other poor investments.

Twain expresses his intensifying suspicion of capitalism in one other selection from Pudd'nhead *Wilson's* calendar when he writes, "October 12, the Discovery. It was

wonderful to find America, but it would have been more wonderful to miss it" (120). With America emerging as the land of robber barons and capitalistic corruption, it is reasonable to assume that Twain's caustic statement about his country is a product of his failure with the economic system it embraces. Indeed, the America represented in *Pudd'nhead Wilson* is considerably darker than the idyllic young nation of *Tom Sawyer.* In *Tom Sawyer*, Twain describes almost playfully Tom's capitalistic exploitation of his friends in the fence whitewashing scene, and although Twain is at times critical of bourgeois values, ultimately, the text is a testament to capitalistic hegemony. Less than twenty years later, Twain emerges as an outspoken critic of the American economic system. The change in tone from *Tom Sawyer* to Pudd'nhead Wilson's calendar indicates a significant shift in the author's *weltanschauung.*

A brief survey of the chapter epigraphs, of course, is not sufficient for a scholarly discussion of how Twain challenges bourgeois beliefs in *Pudd'nhead Wilson.* One must make a closer investigation to fully understand the change in the author's views. Despite the development of Twain's deep skepticism toward capitalism, he once again uses the wealth as resolution approach discussed in this study. However, as alluded to, the results are quite different for most of the characters in this particular novel. Only David Wilson, the misunderstood intellectual of Dawson's Landing, seems to experience the wealth as happy ending that Tom Sawyer and Tom Canty enjoyed in previous novels.

The resolution to *Pudd'nhead Wilson* treats the title character in a similar manner to Tom Sawyer and the other main characters in Twain's previous works. Like Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn finding treasure and Tom Canty's ascension to the office of

King's Ward, Wilson's success as an attorney at the conclusion of the novel suggests that he will prosper and have his happy ending. Twain writes:

> Troop after troop of citizens came to serenade Wilson, and require a speech, and shout themselves hoarse over every sentence that fell from his lips—for all his sentences were golden, now, all were marvelous. His long fight against hard luck and prejudice was ended; he was a made man for good. (120)

After twenty years of being called "Pudd'nhead" by Dawson's Landing society, Wilson finally emerges as a successful member of the bourgeoisie. In Chapter One, Twain tells us that such was Wilson's goal in relocating to Missouri: "[Wilson] wandered to this remote region from his birth-place in the interior of the State of New York, to seek his fortune. He was twenty-five years old, college-bred, and had finished a post-college course in an eastern law school a couple of years before" (5). Wilson's purpose of coming to Dawson's Landing was to become wealthy. Once his law firm fails to attract a single client, he is forced to seek employment "in the humble capacities of land surveyor and expert accountant" (7). After years of failing to obtain significant capital in Missouri, Wilson appears to be on his way to achieving bourgeois status like Tom Sawyer and Tom Canty at the novel's resolution. Once again, Twain appears poised to offer wealth as the best possible ending to his novel. However, Wilson is the only character who benefits from wealth in *Pudd'nhead Wilson's* conclusion, abandoning the "fake happy ending" formula of previous efforts.

The fate of Roxy, Chambers, and Tom can be read as anything but happy. Roxy, considered by most Twain scholars as the author's best-developed female character, receives wealth at the novel's conclusion but lives the rest of her life without happiness. Twain states:

> Roxy's heart was broken. The young fellow upon whom she had inflicted twenty-three years of slavery [Chambers] continued the false heir's [Tom Driscoll] pension of thirty-five dollars a month to her, but her hurts were too deep for money to heal; the spirit in her eye was quenched, her martial bearing departed with it, and the voice of her laughter ceased in the land. In her church and its affairs she found her only solace. (120).

A very revealing phrase from the above passage is "her hurts were too deep for money to heal." Such a choice of words is a radical departure from early Twain. In *Tom Sawyer*, wealth was sufficient for resolving the conflicts caused by Injun Joe and Huck's poor upbringing. In *The Prince and the Pauper*, wealth ameliorates the pains of abuse and injustice endured by Prince Edward, Tom Canty, and Miles Hendon. Perhaps Twain's weakest attempt at using wealth as resolution occurs in *Huckleberry Finn*, when forty dollars satiates Jim after being tortured by Tom Sawyer. However, *Pudd'nhead Wilson* marks a significant change in Twain's thinking: capital does not necessarily generate happiness. Roxy's inability to resolve her internal turmoil, despite being provided for by Chambers's generosity, represents Twain's most daring critique of bourgeois values.

Twain develops Roxy's character to reveal the incompetence of capitalism throughout the novel, not just at the resolution. After Roxy is freed and finds employment on a steamboat, she appears to be on her way to social mobility: "she was well fixed—rich, as she would have described it; for she had lived a steady life, and had banked four dollars every month in New Orleans as a provision for her old age" (37). In this passage, Roxy is a proletarian conforming to bourgeois conventions in an attempt to "be independent of the human race thenceforth forevermore if hard work and economy could accomplish it" (37). What Roxy does not understand, but the author does, is that the rules of the bourgeoisie work only for the bourgeoisie. As an exploited proletarian worker, there is little chance for her to emerge from subjugation, a fate she realizes when she attempts to

retire from her job on the steamboat and collect her money from the bank. Twain writes, "The bank had gone to smash and carried her four hundred dollars with it. She was a pauper, and homeless. Also disabled bodily, at least for the present" (37). In *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, Twain illustrates the injustice of capitalism as an economic institution with the failure of the bank and Roxy's infirmity.

Roxy's development as an exploited proletarian is not the only intriguing facet of her character, of course. At times, she bravely challenges the conventions of the bourgeois society which has subjugated her throughout her life. In his essay "*Pudd'nhead Wilson* as Criticism of the Dominant Culture," Henry Nash Smith writes:

> She is the only articulate enemy of the aristocracy of Dawson's Landing. Just as in some not negligible sense Judge Driscoll takes over the function of the Arthurian aristocracy in representing the values of a society stained by tyranny and cruelty, Roxy takes over Hank Morgan's role as adversary of the dominant class. (273-74)

By switching her baby's clothes with young Driscoll's in Chapter Three, Roxy gives one baby the fate of an aristocrat and the other that of a subdued laborer. She reveals the absurdity not only of slavery but of social hierarchy when after the switch she says, "Now who would b'lieve clo'es could do de like o'dat? Dog my cats if it ain't all *I* kin do to tell t'other fum which, let alone his pappy" (16). In this passage, Roxy subverts the established bourgeois order by interfering with the Driscoll family inheritance and legacy.

Yet, at the same time, Roxy is significantly influenced by the bourgeois values around her. As Rowe tells us:

> Critics have often noticed that Roxy's character, as powerfully vengeful as it becomes in the narrative, is nonetheless governed consistently by the values of the white ruling class. Roxy's pride regarding Tom's high birth, her "attendance" at the duel between Judge Driscoll and Luigi, her hard work and economy while a chambermaid on the *Grand Mogul*, and her maternal sentiments for Tom—all of these somewhat

> questionable "virtues" identify her self-reliance as well as her criminal potential with white values. (439)

Like Huck Finn, she challenges aristocratic conventions, but at the same time, accepts them as the legitimate way of doing things. Once again, Althusser's theory about education's function in promoting the bourgeois ideology explains Twain's character development. Although a slave early in the novel and later on a subdued laborer on the steamboat, Roxy has been programmed by the dominant ideological state apparatuses to believe that white and wealthy are superior to black and poor. As a result, Roxy conforms to the hegemonic standards throughout the work.

While Twain shows the powerful impact of the dominant ideological influence in shaping one's *weltanschauung* through his portrayal of Roxy, he also displays his disillusionment with capitalism with the wealthy resolution she receives. The author's departure from his established pattern continues with Chambers, as the former slave obtains his rightful inheritance of the Driscoll estate. Chambers's bourgeois future is nothing like Tom Sawyer's or Tom Canty's, however. Rather, his is marred by loneliness and no sense of community:

> The real heir suddenly found himself rich and free, but in a most embarrassing situation. He could neither read nor write, and his speech was the basest dialect of the negro quarter. His gait, his attitudes, his gestures, his bearing, his laugh—all were vulgar and uncouth; his manners were the manners of a slave. Money and fine clothes could not mend these defects or cover them up, they only made them more glaring and the more pathetic. The poor fellow could not endure the terrors of the white man's parlor, and felt at home and at peace nowhere but in the kitchen. The family pew was a misery to him, yet he could nevermore enter into the solacing refuge of the "nigger gallery"—that was closed to him for good and for all. (120-21)

As with Roxy's situation, wealth fails as resolution with Chambers, again showing Twain's disillusionment with capitalism. The bourgeois reader would likely view Chambers's class ascension as positive. However, as Fiedler points out, "We are

intended to feel the 'curious fate' of [Chambers] as anything but fortunate; neither black nor white, he is excluded by long conditioning from the world of the free, and barred from the 'solacing refuge' of the slave kitchens by the fact of his legal whiteness" (251). Despite being elevated financially into the bourgeoisie, Chambers can never be accepted by the white culture because he was educated (so to speak) as a slave. The rightful heir's education leaves him in possession of bourgeois values, while being left unaccepted by their society.

Twain's departure from the "fake happy ending" approach in *Tom Sawyer*, *The Prince and the Pauper*, and *Huckleberry Finn* shows his growing disdain for capitalism. The fate that Tom Driscoll faces at *Pudd'nhead Wilson*'s conclusion, however, is Twain's most caustic critique of bourgeois ideology yet. Rather than receiving capital as David Wilson, Roxy, and Chambers do at the end, after confessing to the murder of Judge Driscoll and being sentenced to life in prison, Tom actually *becomes* capital. Twain writes, "[The creditors owed by the deceased Percy Driscoll] rightly claimed that 'Tom' was lawfully their property and had been so for eight years; that they had already lost sufficiently during that long period" (121). In this passage, Tom descends from bourgeoisie to chattel. The capitalistic perspective of the interpellated townspeople leads them to agree with the creditors. Twain finishes the novel by writing:

> Everybody granted that if 'Tom' were white and free it would be unquestionably right to punish him—it would be no loss to anybody; but to shut up a valuable slave for life—that was quite another matter. As soon as the Governor understood the case, he pardoned Tom at once, and the creditors sold him down the river. (121)

As in other works, Twain's critique of the institution of slavery throughout the novel is quite obvious. Reading *Pudd'nhead Wilson* from a Marxist perspective reveals that the author is also challenging capitalism, a system which exploits the masses for the gain of

the few. After living his life as an exploitative member of the bourgeoisie, Tom becomes property—a considerably darker ending involving wealth than Twain offers with *Tom Sawyer*, *The Prince and the Pauper*, and *Huckleberry Finn.*

Of course, Tom is one of Twain's most intriguing characters throughout the novel and not just during his transformation into capital at the end of the piece. While Twain is critical of the bourgeoisie throughout his works, he often portrays the individual members of the upper class in a positive light. Tom Sawyer and Prince Edward are both examples of sympathetic bourgeois characters. However, Tom Driscoll marks a change in Twain's approach. Again, undoubtedly influenced by his investment failures, Twain offers a biting critique of the bourgeoisie in his development of Tom, the first true bourgeois villain in a Twain novel.

Pudd'nhead Wilson's Tom Driscoll is a gambler, a burglar, and a murderer. These roles are typically reserved for lower class characters in Twain's early works. Examples include Injun Joe in *Tom Sawyer*, John Canty in *The Prince and the Pauper*, and the King and the Dauphin in *Huckleberry Finn.* Crafting Tom Driscoll, a man of assumed bourgeois lineage, as the most despicable character in the novel shows Twain's growing cynicism toward capitalism. Applying Althusser's "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," it is important to point out that Tom was educated with the bourgeois ideology. As Rowe writes, "Twain is careful to tell us, however, that Tom learns to gamble at Yale; he wants the reader to be certain not to associate Tom's vices with the black portion of his heredity" (436). This distinction is important to make. Readers of Twain's era probably would have attributed Tom's negative characteristics to his ethnicity rather than his upbringing. By emphasizing that Tom learned gambling at an

upper class university, Twain is obviously being critical of the wealthy, again displaying the shift in his *weltanschauung*.

Tom's fate at the novel's conclusion seems almost justifiable, when one considers his past deeds. However, it is unlikely that Twain chooses to critique a system he opposes—slavery—by using it as a mechanism for administering justice. Instead, the author appears to challenge capitalism, which enabled his financial failures in the 1890s. Slavery is the most extreme form of bourgeois exploitation of the proletariat. When Twain shows the dehumanization caused by slavery in his works, one is reminded of the greater class struggle between the proletariat and bourgeoisie. Twain showed sympathy for the downtrodden in many of his works, but in *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, he most effectively illustrates the exploitative nature of capitalism and its inherent disregard for humanity as a whole.

By examining the role that wealth plays as resolution in Mark Twain's novels, scholars are granted greater insight into the author's motivation for crafting his works in the manner in which he chose. An interesting characteristic about Twain's approach to writing is his continuing to use wealth as resolution throughout his career. Perhaps this formula originated as a convenient way to tie up all the loose ends in the plot, and Twain decided to persist with it, even as his worldview shifted.

Clearly, Twain was tremendously influenced by his historical situation. Being educated and working in a capitalist country during a time of rapid economic and scientific expansion had to leave quite an impact on Twain. Thus, works such as *Tom Sawyer*, *The Prince and the Pauper*, and *Huckleberry Finn* reflect the author's desire to achieve economic status and obtain material possessions. Twain's ambitions were

consistent with those of the dominant American capitalistic ideology, and these early works reveal as much.

Twain makes a rather significant shift in his attitude toward capitalism in *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, however. Although he is sometimes critical of bourgeois values in *Tom Sawyer* and *The Prince and the Pauper* and even more so in *Huckleberry Finn*, *Pudd'nhead Wilson* is the only work using the wealth as resolution formula that completely rejects capitalistic hegemony. Such a development makes the novel intriguing and worthy of increased scholarly attention. With a decidedly different tone from the previous works, *Pudd'nhead Wilson* marks Twain's apparent change of opinion in regard to economics.

Twain's wealth as resolution approach to novel writing reflects the historical situation in which he lived as well as his shifting *weltanschauung*. It is not a surprising occurrence that while Twain's economic endeavors were successful, he projected a mostly optimistic view of capitalism. Conversely, as his fortunes diminished and he had to declare bankruptcy, his faith in the economic system waned and he became increasingly—and at times bitterly—critical. The fact that it took Twain so long to recognize the incompetence of capitalism in his work shows the system's resistance to change and its immense power to subject people to its ideology. Hegemony is indeed difficult to see beyond, even for one of America's most celebrated social critics.

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